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IT seems an easy thing for a student to say to himself, "I will *study* the Bible." But let him proceed to the doing of it and, if he is faithful and conscientious, he soon finds that he has undertaken a task which might almost be called stupendous. A primary and fundamental requisite of his equipment for that endeavor is *courage*. He will need it in the choice of a method—a method that shall be his own and call forth his best powers. He will need it in his determination to cut loose from all dependence on helps, to save him from the thoughtless acceptance of other men's conclusions, from the distrust of his own powers, and from the adoption of traditional opinions because they *are* traditional. He will need it, after he has stepped forth upon his independent path, to pursue that course resolutely through the thickets and tangled underbrush of the way, the drudgery and weariness of elementary studies which often bear but indirectly on the main effort. For all this and more of the same kind, a true, devoted student of the Bible preëminently must have courage.

IF this rare trait of character has been thus developed in the beginnings of his work on the Scriptures, there need be no fear that the student will fail to possess and manifest it in the *holding* of his conclusions. It requires a far more vigorous exercise of courage in these days to form an independent judgment than it does to maintain it when formed. We, upon whom the ends of the ages have come, are the heirs also of the learning and traditions of the ages. It is this latter inheritance which must be resolutely worked through and

worked over into the metal of one's own conviction. Strenuous is the endeavor ; weary, the toil. There is the stress ; there, the oft-failing struggle. But, once it is accomplished, the sense of relief, the consciousness of victory, the possession of clear vision, of independent decision—these are the satisfactions worthy the storm and strife. Too often is the emphasis misplaced when we remark upon the courage of some scholar in uttering his independent convictions. Let us rather admire the courage that is to be seen in that secret purpose, that earlier decision, that silent but heroic endeavor which carried him successfully through the self-opened path of investigation. No one can courageously maintain his convictions about God's truth until he has had the courage resolutely to break out his own path in their formation.

THE work of "the American Institute of Sacred Literature" has fairly begun. The four departments, viz., those of (1) the Correspondence School, (2) the Summer Schools, (3) Special Courses, and (4) Examinations, are already organized and in operation. The connection of the STUDENT with the Institute, while entirely unofficial, will be very close. The interests of the journal and those of the Institute lie in the same direction. It is confidently believed that the constituency of the STUDENT will feel drawn toward this new undertaking. Is it too much to ask each one who reads this paragraph to consider two or three questions? Whether, for example, (1) there is not some one of the correspondence courses in Hebrew, New Testament Greek, the ancient versions, the Cognate languages, the English Old Testament, or the English New Testament, in which he might work with pleasure and profit? Or, (2) whether there is not material enough and interest enough in the particular locality in which he lives to lead to the organization of a "Local Board" which should lead to a summer institute in the summer of 1890 for the study of the Bible in its original languages or in English? Or, (3) whether through him or his influence there might not be organized during the coming winter an "Institute Bible Club" for the thorough study of some subject or some book? Or, (4) whether he would not propose to the adult classes of the Sunday School to which he belongs (for, of course, he is a

member of a Sunday School) that, in December, 1890, at the close of the work in Luke (the entire year being given to the study of this book), they take the examination in Luke which will be offered to the whole Sunday School world by the Institute of Sacred Literature, an examination which will be of two or three grades, and for the passing of which there will be given a certificate, issued by men who, it may fairly be said, represent the biblical scholarship of America?

In one or another, or perhaps in all of these ways, will not the readers of the *STUDENT* aid and be aided by the new Institute?

IN a recent issue of one of the weekly religious papers appeared a report of a lecture upon the book of Amos. The following note is prefixed:—"The 893d lecture in the consecutive study of the Bible by George Dana Boardman, D.D." The fact is worthy of thoughtful attention, that a clergyman has been willing faithfully and persistently to pursue such a course of study himself and to lead a body of thoughtful, religious people with him into such fields. Both are to be congratulated and the example is worthy to be followed. Worthy of commendation, also, is the practice, here exemplified, of taking an entire book of the Bible as the subject of a single religious discourse. This matter has been more than once alluded to in the columns of the *STUDENT* and a similar undertaking urged upon all preachers. Such biblical preaching is both fresh and stimulating in itself, while it also cultivates a habit of thought and expression in the preacher that will give him increasing power and pungency in all his pulpit and pastoral activity.

IN this connection, as a sign of the times, it is worth while to call attention to a programme, lying before us, of the work of a Pastoral Union in one of our large cities. Out of eleven subjects for essays and discussions, seven are directly concerned with the Bible and biblical subjects. Such matters are considered as "The Hittite Empire," "How many Psalms are Davidic?" "The New Era in Bible Study," "Review of Ladd's 'What is the Bible?'" "Fulfillment of Prophecy."

This may fairly be regarded as an example of the trend of study among the ministry, which is turning with more and more increasing attention and thought to biblical problems. There is hope in this fact;—hope for theological studies, hope for the personal life of the preacher, for his pulpit and pastoral activity, hope for the people and the world. For more earnest and scientific study of the Scriptures means all this and—how much more than this!

ONE cannot compare the present status of English-Bible study in college with that of three or four years ago without being struck with the wonderful advance which has been made in respect to both amount and character. It is too early, as yet, to know the exact facts, for in many colleges classes are just beginning to organize. We shall not go far wrong in saying that at least three men are engaged in the work this year where in 1886 one man had undertaken it. In some institutions the increase in numbers is still greater. But this is not the more important aspect of the case. A kind of work is being done to-day which was hardly thought possible three years ago. The superficial handling of a few much abused texts has been found to be insufficient. College men will no longer endure such work. They have asked for a consecutive treatment of an important period, or of a fundamental question. They have, in other words, asked for a treatment of the Bible which will lift it, from the degraded position which it has hitherto been allowed to occupy, to a place as least as high as that which is accorded profane literature. That the Bible has not been studied in college, that the colleges have turned out so many skeptics, is due to the absurd, the weak, the childish character of the instruction sought to be furnished. College students are thinking men, not puling infants. Many of them want meat; some of them may be satisfied with milk; none of them will accept what a fair trial has shown to be “unsubstantial.”